

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A backlight unit, comprising:
a light source for generating light; and
an element comprising a rear broad side and a front broad side, the rear broad side having a groove with an incident portion on a first side of the groove, through which light generated by the light source enters into the element, and the front broad side having an emitting portion through which the entering light is emitted after traveling through the element,
wherein a light reflective thin film is provided on the entire inner side of the groove except the first side,

wherein a rib is provided on at least a portion of a periphery of the element to reinforce the element, and a panel receiving portion is provided at a portion of the element surrounded by the rib.

2. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein the element is a light guide plate ~~comprising a side through which light generated by the light source enters into the element and a first broad side through which the light is emitted after traveling through the element.~~

3. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein:
the light guide plate is provided with a the groove along at least an edge thereof of the rear broad side and the light source is provided in the groove; and
light generated by the light source enters through ~~a first side~~ the incident portion of the groove into the light guide plate.

4. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 2, wherein:
a dot pattern of minute pits and projections is provided on the ~~first~~ front broad side of the light guide plate; and

~~the light guide plate further comprises a second rear broad side is opposed to the first front broad side, the rear broad side having a plurality of grooves being arranged substantially in parallel to the front broad side on the second broad side.~~

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein:
~~a side of the element on which the emitting portion is provided~~ the front broad side is in the shape of a rectangle having four corner portions; and
the rib is provided in the vicinity of any of the four corner portions.

7. (original) A backlight unit according to claim 6, wherein:
at least an additional rib is provided on at least a portion of the periphery of the element; and
a plurality of ribs including the rib and the additional rib are provided in the vicinity of two adjacent corner portions of the four corner portions, in the vicinity of two opposing corner portions of the four corner portions, or in the vicinity of the four corner portions.

8. (original) A backlight unit according to claim 6, wherein the rib is provided on any of the four corner portions as well as in the vicinity thereof.

9. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 1, wherein:
the element is a frame having a buried portion in which a light-transmissive material is buried; and

~~the buried portion comprises a side through which light generated by the light source enters into the element and a first broad side through which the entering light is emitted after traveling through the element.~~

10. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 9, wherein:

the buried portion is provided with a the groove along at least an edge thereof of a rear broad side of the buried portion and the light source is provided in the groove; and

light generated by the light source enters through ~~a first side~~ the incident portion of the groove into the buried portion.

11. (currently amended) A backlight unit according to claim 9, wherein:

a dot pattern of minute pits and projections is provided on ~~the first~~ a front broad side of the buried portion; and

~~the buried portion further comprises a second~~ rear broad side of the buried portion is opposed to the ~~first~~ front broad side of the buried portion, the rear broad side of the buried portion having a plurality of grooves being arranged substantially in parallel to the front broad side of the buried portion on the second broad side.

12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) A liquid crystal display apparatus, comprising:

a liquid crystal panel; and

a backlight unit for illuminating the liquid crystal panel,

wherein the backlight unit comprises:

a light source for generating light;

an element comprising a rear broad side and a front broad side, the rear broad side having a groove with an incident portion on a first side of the groove; through which light generated by the light source enters into the element, and the front broad side having an emitting portion through which the light is emitted after traveling through the element,

wherein a light reflective thin film is provided on the entire inner side of the groove except the first side,

wherein a rib is provided on at least a portion of a periphery of the element to reinforce the element, and a panel receiving portion is provided at a portion of the element surrounded by the rib.